

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 MCT-01 SSM-03 /089 W
-----056639 191122Z /14

P R 190840Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7464
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 02691

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XF UR
SUBJ: SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS RE CURRENT VIOLENCE ON
ISRAELI-PLO FRONT

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR VINOGRADOV (WHO CO-CHAIRLED LAST GENEVA MEETING ON MIDDLE EAST) SPOKE TO ME AT SOME LENGTH MARCH 18 ABOUT CURRENT VIOLENCE ON ISRAEL-PLO FRONT. WHILE HE WAS PREDICTABLY AND PIOUSLY OUTRAGED BY THE ISRAELI ACTION IN SOUTH LEBANON, I FOUND HIM SURPRISINGLY SENSITIVE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PLO TERRORIST ATTACK IN ISRAEL. HE ADMITTED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE EMBARRASSED BY THE FACT THIS ATTACK TOOK PLACE IMMEDIATELY AFTER ARAFAT'S VISIT TO MOSCOW.

2. FOR WHAT IT MAY BE WORTH, VINOGRADOV SAID THAT HE FELT ARAFAT WAS TOTALLY UNAWARE OF THE ATTACK, WHICH HE BELIEVED WAS CARRIED OUT BY PLO LEFT-WING EXTREMISTS. HOWEVER, HE ALSO FELT ARAFAT HAD TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACTION IN ORDER TO PRESERVE HIS POSITION WITHIN THE PLO.

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3. VINOGRADOV FURTHER STATED THAT SOVIETS BELIEVE ARAFAT HAS "MATURED" SIGNIFICANTLY IN RECENT TIMES. HE SAID SOVIETS HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH HIM TO ADVANCE THIS "MATURING" PROCESS. AT THE SAME TIME, SOVIETS FELT ARAFAT HAD SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN MAINTAINING HIS POSITION OF PRIMACY WITHIN THE PLO.

4. THIS OBSERVATION LED TO A DISQUISITION ON THE HISTORY OF THE SOVIET REVOLUTION, IN WHICH, ACCORDING TO VINOGRADOV, THE MOST VIOLENT AND BLOODY CLASHES CAME AFTER THE BOLSHEVIST VICTORY, AND WERE FOUGHT AGAINST LEFT-WING EXTREMISTS. THE AMBASSADOR PREDICTED THAT THE PALESTIANIANS WOULD CONTINUE TO HAVE SEVERE INTERNAL PROBLEMS AND EVENTUALLY WOULD HAVE TO BRING THEIR LEFT-WING EXTREMISTS UNDER CONTROL.
SULLIVAN

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